

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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SEPT 26

SUBJ: WEST GERMAN PRESS REACTION TO US PEACE PROPOSALS ON
VIET NAM

1. WEST GERMAN NEWSPAPERS HAVE GIVEN FAIRLY HEAVY
COVERAGE TO NEW US PEACE INITIATIVES ALTHOUGH THE SUBJECT HAS
BEEN OVERSHADOWED BY BUNDESTAG DEBATES AND THE US TRIP OF
CHANCELLOR ERHARD.

2. SEPT 26 PAPERS CARRIED STRAIGHT NEWS REPORTS OF THE WEEKEND
TALKS BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND GROMYKO, AND THE NEGATIVE
REACTION TO US PROPOSALS FROM PEKING AND HANTI. THE SECRETARY'S
STATEMENT THAT THE US IS WILLING TO HAVE VIET CONG PARTICIPATION
IN A POST-WAR SOUTH VIETNAMESE REGIME AND HIS SUGGESTION
THAT HANOI AND PEKING TEST OUR EFFORTS BEFORE BRANDING THEM
AS A "PEACE SWINDLE" WERE FEATURED.

3. EDITORIALS IN PAPERS OVER THE WEEKEND STRESSED THAT THE
US WAS PUTTING FORTH A MORE POSITIVE FACE WITH AMBASSADOR

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GOLDBERG'S PROPOSALS. STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG OF SEPT 24 SAID
THAT GOLDBERG'S SUGGESTIONS "SHOULD CASE AMERICA'S INTERNATIONAL
POSITION AND PUT THE COMMUNISTS POLITICALLY ON THE DEFENSIVE".
THE SUEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG SAW TWO NEW ASPECTS IN THE US OFFER/
OUR WILLINGNESS TO LINK THE END OF THE BOMBING OF A DE-
ESCALATION OF NORTH VIETNAMESE ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH VIET NAM
AND OUR WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THE VIET CONG AS PARTICIPANTS
IN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. THE US HAD TAKEN THESE MOVES, WHICH
MARKED A STEP IN THE DIRECTION PROPOSED BY SENATOR MANSFIELD,
NOT BECAUSE OF MILITARY WEAKNESS, BUT TO EASE THE WAY FOR
GROMYKO TO ACT AS AN INTERMEDIARY WITH THE NORTH VIETNAMESE.
HILLENDRAND
BT

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State Dept. review completed

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